



# NEWS

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **CHP: FEWER VEHICLES STOLEN IN 2006** **Ninety Percent of Stolen Cars Reunited with Owners**

*Task forces and technology key to law enforcement's fight to stop car thieves*

(Sacramento) Vehicle theft in California is on the decline. According to California Highway Patrol (CHP) statistics there was a 5.5 percent decrease statewide, or 14,399 fewer vehicles stolen, in 2006 from the previous year. Additionally, the majority of cars reported stolen were recovered. Ninety percent of the 247,896 cars stolen in 2006 were reunited with their owners.

“Car theft is a crime of opportunity,” said CHP Commissioner Mike Brown. “A little bit of prevention can go a long way, but when a car is stolen, the tools we have now are helping to return the stolen cars to their rightful owners.”

The CHP is involved in 16 county-funded vehicle theft task forces. These investigative teams comprised of a number of law enforcement agencies throughout the state, use bait cars to combat auto theft.

Bait cars are outfitted with a global-positioning system (GPS) and a video camera. The location, speed and direction of the vehicle are tracked via GPS. Officers are tipped off when a thief attempts to steal a car. As soon as officers are in position, the engine can be disabled with the click of a computer mouse and the suspect inside, arrested. The video footage is then used as evidence in court to prosecute the suspect.

The Bait Car program has proven to be a successful deterrent. Upwards of 95 percent of the time, if an activation occurs on a bait car, the thief will eventually steal the car and will also be arrested. In 2006, the department made 357 arrests from bait car deployments.

“Criminals are beginning to wonder what is, and what isn’t, a bait car,” said Commissioner Brown.

Another tool being used by the department to recover stolen vehicles is Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR). ALPR has allowed the CHP to seize or recover 868 wanted or stolen

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vehicles worth more than \$7 million and, in the process, arrest 535 suspects through the period ending September 2006.

The system, mounted onto marked patrol cars, reads license plates of vehicles and compares them against the state's database of stolen and wanted vehicles. Currently, the CHP has a 73 percent recovery rate using ALPR.

“It’s like an electronic hot sheet; it allows officers to obtain information instantly on a car’s license plate to see if it belongs to a stolen car,” said Commissioner Brown.

Stanislaus County, an area particularly hard hit by vehicle theft in recent years, has noticed a difference since the implementation of the new auto-theft technology. The County saw a 40.6 percent decrease in the number of vehicles stolen from 2005 to 2006.



# 2006

## CALIFORNIA VEHICLE THEFT

### DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

#### THEFT AND RECOVERY DATA

<b>A. THEFTS</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>% +/-</b>
AUTOMOBILES	161,640	149,432	-7.6%
MOTORCYCLES	8,748	8,480	-3.1%
PERSONAL TRUCKS	75,198	71,836	-4.5%
COMMERCIAL TRUCKS	2,008	2,025	+0.8%
RECREATIONAL VEHICLES	2,452	2,560	+4.4%
TRAILERS	7,658	7,214	-5.8%
OTHER (Specially constructed vehicles, mopeds, etc.)	4,591	6,349	+38.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>262,295</b>	<b>247,896</b>	<b>-5.5%</b>
<b>B. RECOVERIES</b>			
AUTOMOBILES	153,239	142,909	-6.7%
MOTORCYCLES	3,520	3,322	-5.6%
PERSONAL TRUCKS	67,369	64,395	-4.4%
COMMERCIAL TRUCKS	1,846	1,806	-2.2%
RECREATIONAL VEHICLES	1,199	1,183	-1.3%
TRAILERS	3,728	3,545	-4.9%
OTHER (Specially constructed vehicles, mopeds, etc.)	3,281	5,021	+53.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>234,182</b>	<b>222,181</b>	<b>-5.1%</b>
<b>C. RECOVERY RATE (%)</b>			
AUTOMOBILES	94.8%	95.6%	+0.8%
MOTORCYCLES	40.2%	39.2%	-1.0%
PERSONAL TRUCKS	89.6%	89.6%	0.0%
COMMERCIAL TRUCKS	91.9%	89.2%	-2.7%
RECREATIONAL VEHICLES	48.9%	46.2%	-2.7%
TRAILERS	48.7%	49.1%	+0.9%
OTHER (Specially constructed vehicles, mopeds, etc.)	71.5%	79.1%	7.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>89.3%</b>	<b>89.6%</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>



# 2006

## THEFTS BY COUNTY

COUNTY	2005	2006	% +/-	COUNTY	2005	2006	% +/-
Alameda	15,668	17,204	+9.8%	Orange	13,360	10,900	-22.6%
Alpine	0	0	0%	Placer	1,323	1,053	-25.6%
Amador	79	75	-5.3%	Plumas	25	22	-13.6%
Butte	1,225	926	-24.4%	Riverside	15,789	14,968	-5.5%
Calaveras	96	73	-24.0%	Sacramento	16,688	16,199	-3.0%
Colusa	60	53	-11.7%	San Benito	167	150	-11.3%
Contra Costa	8,977	8,541	-4.9%	San Bernardino	17,262	15,868	-8.8%
Del Norte	86	88	+2.3%	San Diego	27,767	25,825	-7.5%
El Dorado	429	400	-7.3%	San Francisco	8,520	6,935	-22.9%
Fresno	7,957	7,806	-1.9%	San Joaquin	7,396	6,810	-8.6%
Glenn	77	51	-51.0%	San Luis Obispo	471	421	-11.9%
Humboldt	716	534	-34.1%	San Mateo	2,774	2,852	+2.8%
Imperial	1,060	1,143	+7.8%	Santa Barbara	1,084	884	-22.6%
Inyo	41	28	-46.4%	Santa Clara	8,220	10,280	+25.1%
Kern	6,136	6,310	+2.8%	Santa Cruz	897	704	-27.4%
Kings	500	526	+5.2%	Shasta	834	722	-15.5%
Lake	155	186	+20.0%	Sierra	1	0	100%
Lassen	35	28	-25.0%	Siskiyou	70	55	-27.3%
Los Angeles	71,090	66,727	-6.5%	Solano	2,725	2,638	-3.3%
Madera	696	566	-23.0%	Sonoma	1,240	982	-26.3%
Marin	838	837	-0.1%	Stanislaus	6,811	4,844	-40.6%
Mariposa	16	15	-6.7%	Sutter	716	690	-3.8%
Mendocino	169	161	-5.0%	Tehama	234	187	-25.1%
Merced	1,469	1,262	-16.4%	Trinity	45	48	+6.7%
Modoc	7	13	+85.7%	Tulare	3,932	3,980	+1.2%
Mono	11	9	-22.2%	Tuolumne	216	210	-2.9%
Monterey	2,054	2,042	-0.6%	Ventura	2,219	2,063	-7.6%
Napa	348	368	+5.7%	Yolo	995	812	-22.5%
Nevada	192	170	-12.9%	Yuba	197	151	-30.5%
				Other	130	501	+285.4%

Total	2005	2006	% +/-
	262,295	247,896	-5.5%



# 2006

## RECOVERIES BY COUNTY

COUNTY	2005	2006	% +/-	COUNTY	2005	2006	% +/-
Alameda	14,825	16,785	+13.2%	Orange	10,866	8,350	-23.2%
Alpine	0	2	+200.0%	Placer	951	800	-15.9%
Amador	91	58	-36.3%	Plumas	20	16	-20.0%
Butte	1,037	790	-23.8%	Riverside	13,395	12,731	-5.0%
Calaveras	94	66	-29.8%	Sacramento	15,518	15,495	-0.1%
Colusa	58	50	-13.8%	San Benito	140	141	+0.7%
Contra Costa	9,304	8,827	-5.1%	San Bernardino	15,104	13,856	-8.3%
Del Norte	70	72	+2.9%	San Diego	21,737	20,260	-6.8%
El Dorado	310	315	+1.6%	San Francisco	7,974	6,582	-17.5%
Fresno	7,186	6,935	-3.5%	San Joaquin	6,974	6,274	-10.0%
Glenn	81	59	-27.2%	San Luis Obispo	450	375	-16.7%
Humboldt	646	508	-21.4%	San Mateo	2,493	2,491	-0.1%
Imperial	633	641	+1.3%	Santa Barbara	905	777	-14.1%
Inyo	36	28	-22.2%	Santa Clara	7,468	9,472	+26.8%
Kern	5,226	5,277	+1.0%	Santa Cruz	688	534	-22.4%
Kings	375	377	+0.5%	Shasta	735	650	-11.6%
Lake	152	160	+5.3%	Sierra	3	0	-100.0%
Lassen	26	26	0%	Siskiyou	61	47	-23.0%
Los Angeles	63,664	59,874	-6.0%	Solano	2,362	2,359	-0.1%
Madera	670	536	-20.0%	Sonoma	1,104	896	-18.8%
Marin	564	590	+4.6%	Stanislaus	6,190	4,310	-30.4%
Mariposa	20	11	-45.0%	Sutter	693	633	-8.7%
Mendocino	151	138	-8.6%	Tehama	211	185	-12.3%
Merced	1,465	1,301	-11.2%	Trinity	48	55	+14.6%
Modoc	5	10	+100.0%	Tulare	3,766	4,011	+6.5%
Mono	4	8	+100.0%	Tuolumne	207	195	-5.8%
Monterey	1,947	1,874	-3.7%	Ventura	1,827	1,730	-5.3%
Napa	250	281	+12.4%	Yolo	1,029	830	-19.3%
Nevada	147	154	+4.8%	Yuba	157	158	+0.6%
				Other	2,069	2,215	+7.1%

Total	2005	2006	% +/-
	234,182	222,181	-5.1%